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FRENCH only**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety
(Thirty-fifth session, 3 - 6 October 2000,
agenda item 2 (c) (iii))**AMENDMENTS TO AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
1968 CONVENTIONS ON ROAD TRAFFIC AND ON ROAD SIGNS AND SIGNALS
AND THE 1971 EUROPEAN AGREEMENTS SUPPLEMENTING THEM****Definition of a moped and of certain light motor vehicles**Transmitted by BelgiumA. Mopeds

Mopeds include vehicles which have evolved differently in many countries; some no longer correspond even to the very broad definition in the Vienna Conventions, which go so far as to state in article 1, paragraphs (m) and (n) that mopeds may be treated as either bicycles or motorcycles.

This is probably the concept which has the largest number of variants in national bodies of law, no doubt because mopeds have long been regarded as light vehicles for very local use, with practically no impact on international traffic.

In fact, it is important to define mopeds as a vehicle class of their own, separate from motorized bicycles and light motorcycles.

If mopeds are to be distinguished from light motorcycles, then any "tweaking" of their engine power (by tampering with the motor to increase their speed) cannot be accepted or tolerated. It is not enough to establish a maximum design speed. A speed limit on the road must also be set and checked, just as is done for other vehicle categories such as trucks.

In the light of the need for the member States of the European Union and the associated countries to observe Directives 92/61/CEE and 93/93/CEE, a draft definition is hereby put forward, and is proposed for incorporation in the European Agreement supplementing the Convention on Road Traffic, rather than in the Convention itself. While such a definition may be appropriate for European countries, it would probably be unnecessary and indeed rather difficult to ensure its worldwide acceptance by countries in other United Nations regions.

B. Proposal for the amendment of the 1971 European Agreement supplementing the Convention on Road Traffic

"Moped" means any two-wheeled or three-wheeled vehicle which is fitted with an internal combustion engine having a cylinder capacity not exceeding 50 cc or an electric motor, and a maximum design speed not exceeding 45 km per hour;

Contracting Parties may also regard as mopeds light quadricycles with the same cylinder characteristics and speed limits, provided that their maximum power does not exceed 4 kW and their mass does not exceed ... kg.

Light motor vehicles used by disabled persons which cannot exceed walking speed shall not be regarded as mopeds.

C. Motorized quadricycles

The Working Party will be called upon to consider whether it would be appropriate to introduce into the Conventions or the European Agreements supplementing them a definition for a category of four-wheeled motor vehicles, which is found in the European Union directives and in the legislation of several countries.

These are vehicles which are between motorcycles and automobiles, and which have hitherto been treated as automobiles in the Conventions. Several countries have pointed out that the number of such vehicles is limited when compared with other categories. However, their numbers are growing.

D. Proposal for the amendment of the Convention on Road Traffic or the European Agreement supplementing the Convention

"Motorized quadricycle" means any four-wheeled motor vehicle other than those considered as mopeds, with an unladen mass not exceeding ... kg and a maximum engine power not exceeding 15 kW.

Unless otherwise provided, drivers of such quadricycles must observe the same rules as drivers of automobiles.*

* For example, helmets must be worn if there is no driver compartment.